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Testimony in Support of Raised House Bill 6746 Transportation Committee February 27, 2023

Chairs Cohen and Lemar, and Ranking Members Hwang and Kennedy, I write to express my support of **House Bill 6746** *An Act Concerning Wrong- Way Driving Detection and Prevention* which provides notification systems and deterrents in an effort to prevent wrong way driving.

Whether a person enters a highway in the wrong direction due to sleep deprivation, confusion, or under the influence of a legal or illegal substance, the danger to everyone else on the road is the same. According to the Department of Transportation, wrong way fatal crashes increased from four fatality crashes and four total crashes in 2021 to 23 fatality crashes and 13 total crashes in 2022 ¹. This is a large increase in just one year. The CT DOT's Crash Emphasis Area data shows that the majority of these crashes are head-on collisions. The implementation of rumble strips, in conjunction to the other two counter measures provided under this bill, will hopefully work to eliminate wrong way crashes in Connecticut.

Rumble strips on exit ramps provide two types of warnings to wrong-way drivers. When drivers run over rumble strips heading in the opposite direction, they receive an aural warning (louder ambient noise) as well as a physical warning (vibration through the tires). Conversely, a vehicle traveling the correct direction will not receive an aural warning. Rumble strips along with the visual warning provided by flashing lights should provide sufficient warning to drivers that they are entering the wrong way on a highway and should hopefully cause them to stop driving in the wrong direction. These highway notification and detection systems play a critical role in preventing collisions due to wrong way driving. I strongly agree that public awareness will also be a key component in the roll out of this program. Public awareness and knowledge of these systems will help educate drivers about what is being done to keep them safer.

I greatly appreciate you incorporating rumble strips at exit ramps to alert wrong way drivers that they are entering an off ramp. I strongly urge the Transportation Committee to pass *An Act Concerning Wrong- Way Driving Detection and Prevention* to help eliminate and prevent wrong way crashes and fatalities. Thank you for your consideration.

¹ Connecticut Department of Transportation. (2023, February 3). Transportation Committee: Oversight Hearing . Connecticut.

